THE UNITED KINGDOM NATIONALS KEEP THEIR RIGHT OF RESIDENCE
RESIDENCE RIGHTS IN PORTUGAL FOR UNITED KINGDOM NATIONALS AFTER THE UNITED KINGDOM’S WITHDRAWAL FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION (BREXIT)

On 29 March 2019, 23h00 (WET), the United Kingdom (UK) will cease to be a European Union (EU) Member State. The Withdrawal Agreement1 will ensure the status and rights of EU citizens living in the UK and of UK nationals living in EU Member States. The Agreement also establishes a transition period from the withdrawal date until 31 December 2020.

Under the term of the Agreement, UK nationals and their family members who already are permanent residents in Portugal will be able to maintain that right. And all those who arrive before the end of the transition period (31 December 2020) will be able to acquire permanent residence status after completing a five-year residence period.

The Portuguese Government wants to reassure UK nationals and their family members living in Portugal that they are welcome to stay.

IF YOU ARE ALREADY A PERMANENT RESIDENT IN PORTUGAL

UK nationals and their family members will enjoy exactly the same rights and obligations, framed by the same administrative procedures. Expired residence permits will be renewed under the same requirements already foreseen in national legislation (Law no. 37/06, 9 August). Current fees will also continue to apply.

Therefore:

If you already have a permanent residence card (valid for 10 years), the same rights and obligations apply and no further action is required. If your permanent residence card has expired, you may submit a renewal request to the Immigration and Borders Service (Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras – SEF) by presenting your permanent residence card (expired or valid only for the next six months); and a passport or a valid identity card. If you have changed addresses, you must present proof of your current address (for example, a statement from your Town Council (Junta de Freguesia), your home deed, proof of acquisition of real estate, or your lease contract).

In order to renew their permanent residence card, UK nationals’ family members must submit the above-mentioned documents, as well as a proof of their family connection.

IF YOU ARE NOT YET A PERMANENT RESIDENT IN PORTUGAL

IF YOU HAVE NEVER REGISTERED

If you and your family are already residing in Portugal, but have not yet registered as residents, you must register at the City Council (Câmara Municipal) of your area of residence (you should request the issuance of a registration certificate, which is valid for 5 years).

UK nationals and their family members arriving in Portugal before 29 March 2019 need to register at the City Council (Câmara Municipal) of their area of residence, under the same conditions currently applicable. The Withdrawal Agreement establishes that these rules will apply until the end of the transition period. Therefore, UK nationals and their family members arriving in Portugal before 31 December 2020 must follow the above-mentioned procedure.

If family members of UK nationals are in Portugal before 31 December 2020 must apply for a registration certificate. In the case, you will be required to present any admissible proof establishing that there was a continuous period of residence.

IN CASE OF A NO-DEAL SCENARIO

As there would be no agreed implementation period, the guarantee to acquire the right of permanent residence would only apply to UK nationals who are resident in Portugal by 29 March 2019; all those UK nationals and their family members who are already in Portugal by that date would have until 31 December 2020 to apply for a registration certificate.

ACQUISITION OF PORTUGUESE NATIONALITY

If you want to apply for Portuguese nationality, you can refer to the Institute of Registration and Notary Affairs’ website for more information: http://www.irn.mj.pt. Alternatively, information is also available at every Civil Registration Office.

RELEVANT DATES ESTABLISHED IN THE WITHDRAWAL AGREEMENT

29 March 2019, 23h00 (WET) - United Kingdom’s withdrawal from the European Union
29 March 2019, 23h01 (WET) - Beginning of the transition period
31 December 2020 - End of the transition period

continue to live in Portugal under the same rights and obligations. After completing the five-year residence period, you can apply for a permanent residence card.

IF YOU ALREADY HOLD A FIVE-YEAR REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE

After holding a registration certificate for five years, you should submit an application to SEF for a permanent residence card. As is already the case, you will be required to present any admissible proof establishing that there was a continuous period of residence.

USEFUL CONTACTS

SEF
808 202 653
808 962 690
gccipr.cc@sef.pt

IMPORTANT LINKS
https://www.sef.pt/pt/Pages/homepage.aspx
https://www.portaldiplomatico.mne.gov.pt/politica-externa/brexit

1Please note that the Withdrawal Agreement needs to be ratified by both the UK and the EU for its entry into force. The text can be found on: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/37095/draft_withdrawal_agreement_incl_art132.pdf